



Mississippi Fact Sheet

Public Community Water Fluoridation and Oral Health

The benefits of having good oral health include:

- ❑ Good dental health contributes to general health and well-being across the lifespan.
- ❑ Having good oral health reduces complications associated with diabetes, heart disease and stroke, and may reduce the risk for low-birth weight and premature birth.
- ❑ Good oral health contributes to higher productivity in the workplace and decreased absenteeism at school.
- ❑ Good oral health enhances the pleasure of eating, improves self-esteem and enhances social interactions.

The benefits of public water fluoridation include:

- ❑ Community water fluoridation is an effective, safe and inexpensive way to prevent tooth decay.
- ❑ Children and adults who are at low risk for tooth decay can stay cavity free through frequent exposure to small amounts of fluoride in water.
- ❑ Community water fluoridation prevents the loss of important minerals from tooth enamel in children and adults and makes teeth resistant to tooth decay.
- ❑ Over 162 million Americans, or 65.8 percent of the total U.S. population on public water supply systems, receive fluoridated drinking water.

Did you know that?

- ❑ In Mississippi, 70.5 percent or about 3 in 4 third-grade children in public schools have experienced tooth decay and 15 percent or about 1 in 7 third-grade children have an urgent need for dental care. [Source: MSDH]
- ❑ In Mississippi, 35.1 percent or about 1 in 3 persons aged 65 years of age or older have lost all their natural teeth. [Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (CDC)]
- ❑ Mississippi ranks 2nd of 52 states for persons aged 65 years or older who have lost some or all of their natural teeth. [Source: CDC]
- ❑ Over 1 million Mississippians receive fluoridated water; however, this represents only 42 percent of those on public water systems. In comparison, over 90 percent of the total populations of Tennessee and Georgia receive optimally fluoridated drinking water. [Source: CDC]
- ❑ The cities of Columbus, Laurel and Meridian have been fluoridating drinking water for over 50 years. [Source: CDC]
- ❑ In Mississippi, the cost of public water fluoridation rarely exceeds 80 cents per person per year. [Source: MSDH]

For more information, contact the MSDH Division of Oral Health at (601) 576-7500, or visit our website at <http://www.msdh.state.ms.us>